

Next Steps

The entire study will be completed by April 2004. The remaining tasks include: completing the analysis and evaluation of the transportation system, refining the travel demand model, and performing the air quality analysis within the modeling process; identifying and evaluating alternatives in both the Traffic Impact Study and the Subarea Transportation Plan areas; developing recommendations; and preparation of the draft and final reports.

Public and stakeholder involvement efforts are ongoing through the remaining study. Public and stakeholder involvement are important to ensure appropriate input from stakeholders and the general public, and to promote understanding, cooperation, and support for the study. Here’s how you can get involved.

- Attend public meetings.
- Visit the study website at [www.dot.state.ga.us](http://www.dot.state.ga.us).
- Let us know of any events or publications we can use to provide information on the study.

Stakeholders and public participation will make for a better CCNMP Study and ensure that the diverse needs of park visitors and community residents are addressed. Please help us improve traffic in and around this important national resource!

Meeting Schedule

*An Open House was held on Monday, December 8, 2003 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at the City Hall Cafeteria, 500 City Hall Dr. in Ft. Oglethorpe, Georgia. The last Open House will be held in February 2004 to share study recommendations.*

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Chickamauga and Chattanooga  
National Military Park Transportation Study  
NEWSLETTER



Transportation Study at Battlefield Park Continues

The National Park Service (NPS) and planning partners continue their evaluation of changes in traffic patterns in and around Chickamauga Battlefield resulting from the completion of the US 27 relocation in Walker County, Georgia. At the request of the NPS, the Georgia Department of Transportation is managing this study, which is funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Study partners also include Coosa Valley Regional Development Center, and the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency.

The study’s two components are a Traffic Impact Study and a Subarea Transportation Plan. The larger Traffic Impact Study area includes State Route 146 on the north, Three Notch Road on the east, the City of Chickamauga on the south and State Route 193 on the west. This encompasses portions of eastern Walker County and western Catoosa County as well as portions of the City of Ft. Oglethorpe. The smaller subarea Transportation Plan area consists of the Chickamauga Battlefield Unit of the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.

To date, two of the study’s four phases, data collection and analysis, have been completed with ongoing input from study partners and stakeholders. Once the study is completed, recommendations from the Traffic Impact Study will provide input into the Chattanooga MPO’s transportation planning process. Recommendations from the Subarea Transportation Plan will be reviewed by the NPS in preparing the upcoming update to CCNMP General Management Plan.

This newsletter presents major study findings and next steps for the study which will conclude in April 2004.

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Why Get Involved?

- Preserving the National Military Park is important
- The Park is an economic generator
- Address community concerns

Stakeholders Discuss Needs and Goals

Stakeholder and public involvement is vital to the study. Three groups have been working closely with the study team as part of the study’s outreach efforts:

- A **Project Coordinating Committee (PCC)** guides and oversees administrative and technical aspects of the study. The Committee will review recommendations and guide the public involvement process.
- A **Stakeholder Participation Panel (SPP)**, made up of key stakeholders with a strong interest in the study, provides ongoing advice and comment on study findings.
- A **Broad Stakeholder Public Group**, representing special interests such as local businesses, groups promoting tourism and the interests of low income and minority residents, as well as the general public, also provides feedback.

These groups have met at various times to comment on study results and products. They have provided useful information on transportation issues and goals for the Park and

the surrounding communities as well as transportation needs identified through technical analysis.

The first PCC meeting, held in May, allowed for a dialogue between the project team and PCC to help set goals, objectives and performance measures to guide the study. These goals and objectives are outlined on page 2.

The first SPP meeting, held in July, discussed existing traffic patterns identified through traffic counts and a license tag survey. The group was given an overview of the travel demand modeling process and they discussed key project elements such as transportation and mobility, resource preservation and economic development, and recreation. At this same meeting, the SPP reviewed study goals, objectives, and performance measures. Later, a general public meeting introduced the study to the community at large and we received public comments.

A questionnaire was developed to solicit feedback regarding public perception of existing transportation conditions

# Stakeholders Discuss Needs and Goals

(Continued from page 1)

in and around the Park and desired future conditions. The questionnaire surfaced the following issues and concerns for consideration during the study:

- There is a lack of lighting at intersections along the US 27 relocation.
- People from the local area are using the Park for active recreation, such as hiking and cycling. They are less involved with the commemorative significance and viewing the historic and cultural features.
- Ft. Oglethorpe businesses are concerned about a loss of business due to reduced traffic on Lafayette Road since US 27 was relocated.
- Walker County is developing an overlay district plan for the west side of the Park to protect historical features from future development.
- There is a need to balance preservation of historic and cultural features and the broader community’s objectives to provide mobility, access, and economic development.
- Responsibilities for providing recreation in the community must be clarified. The CCNMP’s role is to preserve the historic and cultural features and enable visitation of the resources. The public responsibility for recreational activities lies with local government.
- Bicycle and pedestrian access to the Park should be emphasized. The South Chickamauga greenway was mentioned as one important connection. In addition, it was suggested that the study address the need for trails as well as for parking. The gateway communities were suggested as appropriate locations for remote parking. The MPO and NPS could support these initiatives in future project funding applications.
- The study should identify the surrounding community’s recreation features and trails, as well as connections to recreational facilities located outside the study area.
- The alternatives should include additional signage directing motorists to roads, including US 27. The MPO is completing a Wayfinding Study, which could be applicable.
- Walker County is undertaking a review of businesses in relationship to the US 27 relocation. They will address design considerations at intersections. This could also have implications for this study.

# Study Goals and Objectives Developed by Study Participants

## Traffic Impact Study Goals and Objectives

To ensure that the transportation system meets the mobility needs of the community and region

- To provide a safe transportation system.
- To promote the development of alternative modes and connections between modes.
- To improve north-south connectivity east of the Chickamauga Battlefield.

To increase the attraction of the US 27 relocation for commuters (motorists not destined to the Park).

- To encourage non-Park traffic to use other alternatives.
- To ensure that the community transportation system can accommodate existing and future needs and provide easy access to the US 27 relocation.

## Subarea Transportation Plan Goals and Objectives

To minimize adverse impacts of traffic and transportation usage on the Chickamauga Battlefield Unit of the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park and its resources.

- To reduce non-Park vehicular traffic volume on park roadways.

- To provide adequate transportation facilities for Park users on Park property.
- To provide an exceptional visitor experience.

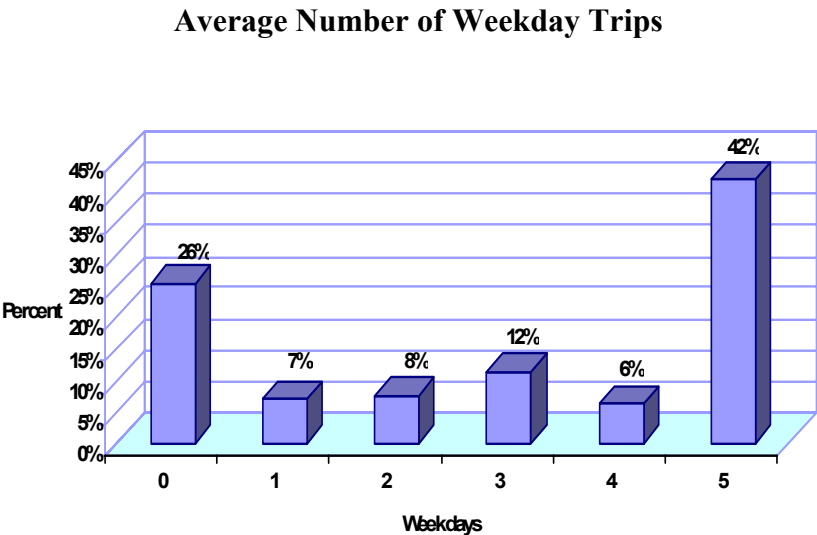
To develop feasible transportation strategies that will respond to anticipated future growth in the area and in the Park.

- To identify transportation alternatives that reflect the unique needs of the Park in preserving its role as a historic resource.
- To identify what local communities can do with land use development to complement and protect the Park (minimize impacts of traffic on the Park).



# What have we learned about travel in the study area?

The data collection and analysis of existing travel patterns and traffic operating conditions has been completed. Several data collection methods were used to obtain a thorough understanding of the needs and issues both inside and outside the Battlefield Park. Coordination and consultation with the PCC, SPP and the general public helped identify issues, define the affected community and the project’s context. Existing data was collected from the various agencies and organizations to help identify planned projects, understand travel patterns, and define the historic and cultural context within the study area. Additional data was also collected to augment existing data and resources.



Vehicle traffic counts were taken in May 2003 to determine how many vehicles are driving on the roadways in a 24-hour time frame. A vehicle tag survey was also conducted at Park entrances and exits to determine travel patterns for vehicles using the roadways near and around the Park. A roadside interview survey was also conducted in July at the Lafayette Rd./Reed’s Bridge Rd. intersection to obtain detailed travel pattern information from Park visitors and the surrounding community. In addition, there were cultural resource evaluations of Park sites for the study.

Traffic volumes have changed since the rerouting of US 27. The roadways with the greatest daily traffic volumes are State Route 2 (Battlefield Parkway), US 27, State Route 146, McFarland Avenue, and Three Notch Road. A travel demand model shows that volumes on the primary roadways will continue to grow. The model indicates traffic being diverted to alternate routes. It also shows an overall increase in volumes on the north-south roads north of SR 2 leading into Chattanooga. For example, commuting patterns in and around the study area show that 46 percent of Catoosa County residents work in Hamilton County, Tennessee.

The roadside interview survey provided the best insights into trip making in and around the Park. According to the roadside survey:

- 17 percent of vehicles traveling through the Park are visitors;
- 39 percent of Park trips are from Ft. Oglethorpe while 24 percent are from other cities besides Chattanooga, Chickamauga, Rossville, or Ringgold;
- 54 percent of Park trips visited the Visitors’ Center;
- 42 percent of those interviewed responded that they travel through the Lafayette Rd. intersection with McFarland Gap Rd./Reed’s Bridge Rd. five days a week, indicating a large number of home to work trips;
- 70 percent of trips are from home indicating that most travel is local.

